5: Schwimmer E-4,5 (1966-1967) 1973
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423 one party fails to make the required response. It creates a wrong impression to
593 speak of land being 'vested' in a man if all he has (independently of some
[578] woman) is a cleared patch of ground on which nothing grows; nor is the woman in a better position as she cannot (independently) bring any crop to maturity as she needs the man's garden magic. As we shall see below, 'rights' in all Orokaiva land transactions are limited in some way similar to this.

3. *Land Transactions between Men and Spirits*

775 A second basic transaction mediated by the land is that between the soul of a
423 recently deceased person and a new-born infant. The Orokaiva believe in
887 transmigration of souls. But this transmigration occurs through the mediation of
241 the piece of land where the spirit of the dead person has taken up special residence. This is usually the garden he or she was cultivating at the time of death. It is a fact of Orokaiva life that old people do not stop gardening as long as they have any strength left in their bodies. Waddell's study of time allocation in Sivepe showed that after the age of fifty-five, time spent on productive subsistence activity, especially in the garden, declined only slightly, whereas non-productive activity (e.g. social obligations, dealings with external agencies) declined very sharply (1968: 104). Old people devote their reduced energies almost exclusively to their gardens, grow progressively closer to their gardens and away from the social network, until finally, after death, their spirit becomes still more closely attached to the land. Their souls re-enter association with the village through transmigration.

775 Crops from the garden cultivated by the deceased may not be eaten by any
768 member of the deceased's lineage. They are harvested by the heir and given away by him to persons outside the lineage. No *bere* are taken from these crops.
241 After a suitable period of fallow, the garden is replanted, but even then the land is not thought to be free of the deceased's spirit. Very often the son or brother of the deceased plants the garden and uses the produce to give a feast. It is thought that the spirit presents no danger to food grown in that plot afterwards.

775 Transmigration is affected by a ritual performed shortly after the birth of an
851 infant. The parents take the child to the land where the spirit of the deceased is
774 believed to reside. They seek the spirit by placing leaves of a fragrant plant called *mo* in a creek which runs through the land. When the spirit is thought to have entered the leaves, the parents address it thus: 'You are dead now. We shall look after the land and we shall look after the baby so it will become big and strong. Then this child will look after the land.' The wife, in preparation for this rite, has brought the baby to the garden in a string bag, and has also brought a stick. When she arrives in the garden, she places the stick in the ground and hangs the baby in its string bag from the stick. After the ritual by the water, she drops some of the leaves by the stick, then takes the baby, the bag and the rest of the leaves and returns home with her husband. The custom is for the husband to say at night: 'I hear the baby crying.' He is expected to go back to the garden and talk to the baby that is believed to be in the stick, telling it that the parents will now look after it and there is no need to cry. He should then take the stick, with the 'baby' inside it, to his home.

[753] The significance of this ritual became a little clearer to me through the case of

a baby, named Jarata, who became sick and died at the age of nine months (of gastro-enteritis). I was told the cause of death was the father's neglect to collect the stick. The baby Jarata who died was described as a spirit baby (*meni ahihi*); the real baby (*meni be*) had been left in the garden inside the stick and was taken away by the fairies (*sovai*). When the baby became sick, the medicine man went to collect the stick, no doubt with appropriate magic, but it was too late; the 'real baby' was no longer there.

This explanation, referring to the father's neglect, was given by members of Jarata's maternal clan. But I was given a second explanation by the child's paternal clan. According to them, the child died because the mother did not look after the land properly. The assumption here is that if the garden where the child obtains what we provisionally call his soul is well tended, then the child's body will also grow well, but if the garden is neglected (horticulturally or ritually), the child will become sick and die. This intimate connection between the garden and the well-being of the soul endures to some extent throughout life but is especially critical in infancy before a child is able to walk and grows teeth.

It is clear that the 'baby in the stick' resembles what is generally known as an 'external soul'. In its more usual form an 'external soul' resides in an object which is carefully preserved from danger, for any vicissitude that may threaten the object will also threaten the life of the person to whom the 'external soul' belongs. Normally such an object is carefully buried and kept out of harm's way. It appears that the Orokaiva do believe in external souls in this sense, and that they reside in particular specimens of a plant after which a person is named, but that is not relevant here. The concept of the baby in the stick differs in interesting ways from the usual kind of 'external soul'.

The first difference is one of terminology. When I asked whether the part of the baby that was in the stick was called its *ahihi* (spirit) this was denied explicitly. On the contrary, it was the *ahihi* of the child that the mother took with her to the village after the ritual and it was the *ahihi* that the mother was left with when the child sickened and died. The child I had been looking at for several months and that died of gastro-enteritis was nothing but an *ahihi* and it was for that reason that it wasted away and could not live. The part left in the stick and stolen by the fairies was actually the child's *hamo*, its body. Emphatically, therefore, the Orokaiva believe that *ahihi* can be corporeal and that *hamo* can be incorporeal.

Let us now consider more precisely the transaction between deceased and infant that may be called transmigration of souls, which is mediated through the land. Let us start with the death of a man of the Seho clan who was called Jarata (1). Jarata's spirit stayed on the land he had been cultivating at the time of death. Some six years later, Jarata's brother lent this land for a season to Gilford, the husband of a classificatory sister. Gilford's wife was pregnant at the time. When the infant was born, it was named by the man who had lent the land, and was given the name of the dead brother, Jarata. As far as I understand, the effect of this act of naming was to attach the *ahihi* of Jarata (1) to the infant, Jarata (2). (A male infant may obtain its name from either its mother's or its father's patrilineage.) But in addition to *ahihi*, the baby had to be given bodily strength and vigorous growth, in other words, it had to have *hamo*. This could be obtained only from the garden where Jarata (1) was still present. Jarata's *hamo*

619 have numbered several thousand at least (nor did they have a
721 'distinct dialect and a uniformity of cust m' that might indicate
634 that they by themselves constituted a tribe).

Every Orokaiva person is recruited by birth to the clan of his
851 father. All members of this descent unit claim but cannot trace[1]
611 common patrilineal descent from a usually eponymous ancestor; they do not always share the same plant emblem (erahu)[2] commonly held by patrilineal groups. A large number of clans are included among
614 the mountain Orokaiva; clan membership does not often overlap with tribal membership (though see Williams 1928:406; 1930:154). It is very rare for the clan to act as a political unit, whatever its functions in the past. Williams (1930:102-8) has in mind a different kind of unit (a small, usually localized group 'united by feelings of actual kinship', scarcely more distant than nuclear family relationships) when he says the clan was 'co-operative... in respect to ceremonies and feasts, and more importantly of fighting'.

[C21] There are several clans represented in the great majority of the present villages and fragments of the same clans - what we call clan branches[3] - will be found scattered among similar composite villages, often a considerable distance away.

Clans are not linked to form a wider descent group. Some members of 2 or more distinct named clans, whose ancestors were all at one time known by the one clan name, sometimes profess closer ties to one another for this reason. Jegase clan, for instance, is said to have formerly included groups which have become independent clans.

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1 This disagrees with Williams' description (1930:108) which shows no clear distinction between the clan and lineage (see Royal Anthropological Institute 1960:88-90).

2 Data from Awala and Wasida villages (see Williams O.83; and Appendix D) differs from the information from Inonda (Crocombe and Hogbin 1963:16).

3 Note that Williams (1925:410 and 420) uses either the term 'local clan branch' or 'subclan' to denote 'an incipient clan' which has moved away from the parent group but retains either the original clan name while acquiring a new plant emblem or the original plant emblem while assuming a new clan name. Elsewhere (1928:125) he describes how some clans occupy several villages or parts of villages. Some 'branches' or 'sections' may have adopted a distinctive name or taken possession of the subdivision of former clan land they occupy, while others may not yet have taken either step (ibid.).

Householders with affinal and kinship ties to the bride's mother (category 5) received a larger share of the bride-wealth per household than all others except those of category 1. Moreover, the brother of the bride's mother, another close patrilineal relative of the mother and the husband of the bride's mother's sister (with whom the bride had stayed while her father was at the war) were given cash. These three men received comparatively large shares of other components of the bride-wealth. One of the reasons the households of this category received comparatively large shares may have been that the bride's mother's clan (Tandai'undi) from Ajoro village had formerly transferred rights to a substantial area of land to the Andiriha sub-clan in Inonda. The Inonda people are afraid that if the land is reclaimed, a court may uphold the claim and they therefore attempt to remain on friendly terms with Tandai'undi clan and Ajoro village. This appears to be manifested by generosity in their exchange relationships with Ajoro. 583

The bride's sister's husband and his father (category 6) received small shares.

The only man who received a share but who had no genealogical relationship to the bride was a settler on the Girua land settlement scheme where the bride lived (category 7). His inclusion indicates a flexibility in the exchange system wherein residential proximity without historical or genealogical relationship permits the establishment of exchange relationships.

VI

Less than half the cash demanded was paid and villagers considered that the value of other components of the bride-wealth was well below the target set by the bride's father. At the time they said that more cash would be paid when the groom's supporters sold land to the Administration, but by September 1965 no sale had been effected and no further bride-wealth had been paid. The bride's brother regarded the exchange as complete, but said that the bride's group would have demanded full payment if the groom's father had been alive.

The couple express intent to marry in a church but it is doubtful whether this will happen and even if it does, no additional payment will be made. In February 1964 the groom prepared a customary feast known as pene to mark the birth of his first child but this was not part of the bride-wealth. It was shared by the bride's father, brother, and the other household head of the Joremba'embo lineage in Inonda and her mother's brother from Ajoro. [585] [851]

583 These people were expected to return a feast of similar size for
[85] the groom, in contrast to the bride-wealth for which no return payment is expected.

VII

583 The economic consequences of the payment were greatest in four
613 households - those of the groom and his parallel cousin, both of Jegotumo lineage, who contributed most; and those of the bride's father and brother, both of Joremba'embo lineage, who received most. Other households' contributions to, and shares of, the payment were minor by comparison. Members of a lineage did not act as a unit for the purpose of the marriage, nor was each member expected to contribute to, or share equally in, the payment, or even to contribute in proportion to his wealth.

583 This was not an ideal situation in which to investigate the
614 extent to which the Andiriha clan functions as a unit, because the marriage was within the clan. However, it was by no means a clan affair. On the one hand, Andiriha households from Hanakiro, a village distant from Inonda, took no part, and on the other, heads of households which participated in the exchange were drawn from about 20 different clans. Households from Andiriha lineages other than those of the bride and groom did not contribute significantly more to, or receive significantly larger shares of, the payment than households of other clans.

583 The range of genealogical connections between the groom and
602 heads of contributing households was extremely diverse and there was a similarly wide range of relationships in the recipient group. It is therefore difficult to determine with accuracy the extent to which genealogical relationships influence obligations between households and also the extent to which a particular type of genealogical relationship implies a particular degree of obligation. Adoptive relationships and distance between households appear to modify the extent to which genealogical relationships entail obligations.

583 Co-residence in a village may also have some influence. Some
621 people, though not all, from each of Kakendetta, Hohota I, Hohota II and Usio villages contributed to the payment, but nobody from these villages received a share. On the other hand, no member of Mosou, Ajoro, Sewa or Jegerata - villages which received parts of the payment - made a contribution. Inonda was the only village in which there were both contributors and recipients. This may indicate that membership of a particular village was a factor determining the group with which a household was aligned and may

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CORRESPONDENCE

Virgin birth

Sir,

121 [114] The contributions by Spiro and Kaberry in your June issue (3, 242–61, 311–13) and the continuing correspondence (3, 651–6) prompt me to mention briefly the views on physiological paternity held by the Orokaiva of Papua, as explained to me when I was doing fieldwork there in 1966–1967.

842 [715] The Orokaiva believe that a child is conceived when the spirit of a dead kinsman wishes to enter a new human body. If a newborn child is a male, it is believed to have been formed as the result of sexual congress between the father and mother both of whom have contributed 'blood'. The birth of the male child is, therefore, explained by a combination of two events, the entry of the spirit and sexual intercourse. If a newborn child is a female it is believed to have been formed by 'a woman sleeping alone', i.e. the female child is not thought to have a human genitor. While this theory leaves open the possibility of 'virgin birth', Orokaiva notions about the development of the embryo go against it. The growth of the embryo must be stimulated by frequent sexual intercourse. A spirit is said usually to choose a sexually active woman for its rebirth.

553 842 The customs concerning the naming of children are consistent with this theory. The naming of girls is always left to the mother's consanguines as the spirit which entered her is thought to belong to a deceased maternal consanguine. The naming of boys is more complicated as the question arises whether the spirit entered the mother and thus fertilised her, or entered the father and passed from him to the mother. In the former case, it is presumed that the spirit was a dead consanguine of the mother; naming is then entrusted to the mother's consanguines. In the latter case, it is presumed that the spirit was a dead consanguine of the father whose kinsmen are accordingly entrusted with the naming ritual. About half of the male babies are, according to my records, named by maternal relatives, and half by paternal ones.

● 851 [614] A medicine man (*sivo embo*) is called in to determine to whose side the spirit of a male baby belongs. Both the male and the female babies become part of the paternal clan (the Orokaiva are patrilineal). If a man has paid bridewealth for a woman, he is pater to all the children borne by that woman as long as the

851 marriage is in force; he is, in addition, considered to be the genitor of all her male offspring though not her female offspring.

842 It is obvious that the Orokaiva know the 'basic fact' that when a man and woman have sexual intercourse, the birth of a child often follows and that the latter, in common experience, does not occur unless preceded by the former. The recognition of this fact does not impel them to adopt a genuine 'theory of physiological paternity'; their basic theory remains that of spirit entry which is deemed essential to the conception of all children, whether male or female. The notion of physiological paternity is introduced only to solve a somewhat different problem: why the sexes differ in physiology and legal status. The answer runs as follows: the male is believed to have a special quality (*iwo*), not shared by the female. This is a strength or power enabling the male to play his distinctive roles and it is transmitted by a man to his son in the 'male blood' which enters the mother in intercourse. This is the *iwo* of the lineage. As women do not receive this type of blood, they cannot carry on the lineage: filiation is patrilateral. Having only the 'weaker' blood of their mothers, they become women.

842 562

842 Leach's essay on 'virgin birth' does a good deal to illuminate the Orokaiva case. The Orokaiva, like Christians and the people of ancient Mediterranean societies, believe that some births are the consequence of sexual congress whereas others are not. Both cultures have a further theory according to which some children may be conceived by a 'woman sleeping alone'. Furthermore, both systems explain conception in these circumstances by a spirit entering a woman and fertilising her.

614 182 Now, as I understand Leach, in all quoted cases of parthenogenesis, a great social distance separates a father of egregious status from a mother and maternal lineage of much lower status. In some of the quoted cases, the offspring inherits the father's high status while in others, the offspring remains (as in the Trobriands) in the lower 'stratum' of the mother. The somewhat unusual Orokaiva case fits this pattern quite well. Woman is not destined to stay in the clan but to be abducted or to elope and settle elsewhere, but her children will always covet the clan's land and her brother who is expected to love her is